

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendments

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-10, 12, 13, 15, 20, 23, 28, 31 and 35 have been amended.

Claims 53-55 have been newly added.

Claims 39-49 have been cancelled.

Claims 1-38 and 50-55 are pending.

Per Examiner's Amendment

Claims 1-8, 10, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 36 and 38-55 are cancelled.

Claim 9, 12, 15, 20, 23, 28, 31 and 35 are amended.

Claims 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28, 31, 33, 35 and 37 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

I. Applicant's arguments (see Remarks pages 21-23 filed 2/17/2009) with respect to Claims 1, 5, 9, 12, 15, 20, 23, 28, 31 and 35 have been fully considered and are moot in light of the Examiner's Amendment. The rejections of the pending claims have therefore been withdrawn.

Terminal Disclaimer

II. The terminal disclaimer filed on 4/7/2009 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of U.S. Patent No. 7,180,620 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

Examiner's Amendment

III. An Examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes

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and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

IV. Authorization for this Examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Atty. Paul Teng on April 6, 2009. Please make the following amend and cancel the claims as listed below:

Cancel: Claims 1-8.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service ~~provider~~ depot when servicing is required, comprising:

- a consumable product status detector configured to automatically detect a status of said consumable product used in said image forming apparatus;

- a manager registration part configured to register a manager email address and telephone number of the manager who administers said image forming apparatus;

- a service depot registration part configured to register an email address and telephone number of a service depot;

- a terminal identification information registration part configured to register terminal identification information of said image forming apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

- a consumable product information registration part configured to register order details information, specification of said consumable product and identification of a supplier of the consumable product; [[and]]

- an email controller part configured to send a first email communicating a request for supplying said consumable product, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, the order details information, specification of said consumable product and the identification of the supplier, to said manager email address registered in said manager registration part, when said consumable product status detector detects that said consumable product is nearly ended, and configured to send, when said consumable product status detector has detected that replenishment of the consumable product has been

completed, a second email communicating that the replenishment of said consumable product has been completed, [[and]]

said request of the first email sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for sending to the service depot to order said consumable product and (ii) identifying the registered service depot email address of the supplier to which the order form is to be sent;

an email analysis part configured to analyze a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; and

a display part configured to display various information,

wherein the email controller part causes said display part to display a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, causes said display part to stop displaying the receipt acknowledgement information which has been displayed in said display part after transmission of the second email indicating that the replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, to the manager and service depot, and causes said display part to display that the consumable product was replenished; and

a facsimile controller part wherein said facsimile controller part communicates with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using said facsimile number registered in said terminal identification information registration part when said email communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claim 10.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service depot when servicing is required, comprising:

a maintenance status detector configured to automatically detect an event indicative of a defect in a maintenance component used in said image forming apparatus;

a manager registration part configured to register a manager email address and telephone number of the manager who administers said image forming apparatus;

a service depot registration part configured to register a service depot email address and telephone number of a service depot;

a terminal identification information registration part configured to register terminal identification information of said image forming apparatus, wherein said terminal identification

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information includes at least one of an email address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

a maintenance component information registration part configured to register order details information, specification of a maintenance component, and identification of said service depot;

detecting mean for automatically detecting an event indicating that said maintenance component is defective;

an email controller part configured to send a first email communicating a request for repair service, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, order details information, specification of a maintenance component and the identification of the event, to the respectively registered said manager and service depot email addresses automatically when said maintenance status detector detects said event, and configured to send, when said maintenance status detector detects said event, and configured to send, when said maintenance status detector has detected that the repair has been completed, a second email communicating that the repair has been completed,[[and]]

said request of the first email sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for ordering said repair service and (ii) identifying the registered service depot email address of the service depot;

an email analysis part configured to analyze a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; and

a display part configured to display various information,

wherein the email controller part causes said display part to display a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, causes said display part to stop displaying the receipt acknowledgement information which has been displayed in said display part after transmission of the second email indicating that the repair has been completed, to the manager and service depot, and causes said display part to display that the maintenance component was repaired; and

a facsimile controller part wherein said facsimile controller part communicates with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using said facsimile number registered in said terminal identification information registration part when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

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Cancel: Claim 13.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): An communications terminal apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service ~~provider depot~~ when servicing is required, comprising:

a consumable product status detector configured to detect automatically a status of said consumable product used in said communications terminal apparatus;

a manager registration part configured to register a manager email address and telephone number of said manager;

a service depot registration part configured to register a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot;

a terminal identification information registration part configured to register terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus ;

a consumable product information registration part configured to register order details information, identification of a supplier of the consumable product and specification of said consumable product; [[and]]

an email controller part configured to send a first E-mail requesting a delivery of said consumable product, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, the order details information, specification of said consumable product and the identification of the supplier, to said manager E-mail address registered in said manager registration part, automatically when said consumable product is determined to be in a short supply status based on detect information detected by said consumable product status detector, and configured to send, when said consumable product status detector has detected that replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, a second E-mail reporting that the replenishment of said consumable product has been completed, [[and]]

said first E-mail sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for sending to the supplier to order said consumable product and (ii) identifying the registered service depot E-mail address of the supplier to which the order form is to be sent;

an email analysis part configured to analyze a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; and

a display part configured to display various information,
wherein the email controller part causes said display part to display a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, causes said display part to stop displaying the receipt acknowledgement information which has been displayed in said display part after transmission of the second email indicating that the replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, to the manager and service depot, and causes said display part to display that the consumable product was replenished; and
a facsimile controller part wherein said facsimile controller part communicates with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using said facsimile number registered in said terminal identification information registration part when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claims 16, 17 and 19.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): An communications terminal apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service depot when servicing is required, comprising:

a maintenance status detector configured to detect automatically an event indicative of a need to repair a specific a maintenance component;

a manager registration part configured to register a manager email address and telephone number of said manager;

a service depot registration part configured to register a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot;

a terminal identification information registration part configured to register terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

maintenance component information part configured to register order details information, specification of a maintenance component, and identification of said service depot;

detecting mean for automatically detecting an event indicating that said maintenance component is defective;

an email controller part configured to send a first email communicating requesting a repair service, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, order details information and the identification of the event, to said manager and

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service depot E-mail addresses registered in said manager and service depot registration parts, respectively, automatically when said maintenance status detector detects said event, and configured to send, when said maintenance status detector has been detected that the repair has been completed, a second email reporting completion of the repair, [[and]]

said first email sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for ordering said repair service and (ii) identifying the registered E-mail address of the service depot;

an email analysis part configured to analyze a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; and

a display part configured to display various information,

wherein the email controller part causes said display part to display a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, causes said display part to stop displaying the receipt acknowledgement information which has been displayed in said display part after transmission of the second email indicating that the repair has been completed, to the manager and service depot, and causes said display part to display that the maintenance component was repaired; and

a facsimile controller part wherein said facsimile controller part communicates with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using said facsimile number registered in said terminal identification information registration part when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claims 21 and 22.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): An communications terminal apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service ~~provider~~ depot when servicing is required, comprising:

communications means for performing E-mail communications and facsimile communications;

consumable product status detecting means for detecting automatically a status of said consumable product used in said communications terminal apparatus;

manager registering means for registering a manager E-mail address and telephone number of said manager;

service depot registering means for registering a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot;

terminal identification information registering means for registering terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

consumable product information registering means for registering order details information, specification of said consumable product and identification of a supplier of the consumable product; [[and]]

~~mail~~ email controlling means for sending a first E-mail requesting a delivery of said consumable product, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, the order details information, specification of said consumable product and the identification of the supplier, to said manager E-mail address registered in said manager registering means, automatically when said consumable product is determined to be in a short supply status based on detect information detected by said consumable product status detecting means, and for sending[[.]] a second E-mail reporting ~~when said consumable product status detecting means has detected~~ that replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, as detected by said consumable product status detecting means, [[and]]

said first E-mail sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for sending to the supplier to order said consumable product and (ii) identifying the registered service depot E-mail address of the supplier to which the order form is to be sent;

email analyzing means for analyzing a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; and

display means for displaying various information,

wherein the ~~mail~~ email controlling means causes said display part to display a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, causes said display means to stop displaying the receipt acknowledgement information which has been displayed in said display means after transmission of the second email indicating that the replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, to the manager and service depot, and causes said display means to display that the consumable product was replenished; and

facsimile controlling means for communicating with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using said facsimile number registered in

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said terminal identification information registering means when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claims 24, 25 and 27.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): An communications terminal apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service depot when servicing is required, comprising:

communications means for performing E-mail communications and facsimile communications;

maintenance status detecting means for detecting automatically an event indicative of a need to repair a specific maintenance component;

manager registering means registering a manager E-mail address and telephone number of said manager;

service depot registering means for registering a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot;

terminal identification information registering means for registering terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

registering means for registering order details information, specification of a maintenance component, and identification of said service depot;

detecting mean for automatically detecting an event indicating that said maintenance component is defective;

mail email controlling means for sending a first E-mail requesting a repair service, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, order details information, specification of a maintenance component, and the identification of the event, to said manager and service depot E-mail addresses registered in said manager registering means and service depot registering means, respectively, automatically when said maintenance status detecting means detects said event, and for sending, when said maintenance status detecting means has detected that the repair has been completed, a second E-mail reporting completion of the repair, [[and]]

said first E-mail sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for ordering said repair service and (ii) identifying the registered service depot E-mail address of the service depot;

email analyzing means for analyzing a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; and

display means for displaying various information,

wherein the ~~mail~~ email controlling means causes said display means to display a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, causes said display means to stop displaying the receipt acknowledgement information which has been displayed in said display means after transmission of the second email indicating that the repair has been completed, to the manager and service depot, and causes said display means to display that the maintenance component was repaired; and

facsimile controlling means for communicating with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using said facsimile number registered in said terminal identification information registering means when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claims 29 and 30.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): An method for ordering a consumable product for a communications terminal apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager who contacts a service ~~provider~~ depot when servicing is required, ~~comprising the steps of said communications terminal including a processor with stored control programs for performing the steps comprising:~~

registering a manager E-mail address and telephone number of said manager;

registering a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot;

registering terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

registering order details information, identification of a supplier of the consumable product and specification of said consumable product; [[and]]

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detecting automatically a status of said consumable product used in said communications terminal apparatus;

detecting automatically an event indicating that said consumable product is nearly ended;

sending a first E-mail communicating a request for supplying said consumable product, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, the order details information, specification of said consumable product and the identification of the supplier, to said manager E-mail address, automatically when said event is detected, said request sent automatically to said manager E-mail address (i) including an order form for sending to the service depot an order for said consumable product and (ii) identifying the registered service depot E-mail address of the service depot to which the order form is to be sent;

determining that replenishment of the consumable product has been completed;[[and]]

sending, when it is determined that the replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, a second E-mail to the manager E-mail address and service depot E-mail address automatically to report the replenishment of said consumable product;

analyzing a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order;

displaying a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, stopping display of the receipt acknowledgement information after transmission of the second email indicating that the replenishment of the consumable product has been completed, to the manager, and displaying that the consumable product was replenished; and

communicating with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using the registered facsimile number when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claims 32 and 34.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): An method for ordering a repair service on a communications terminal apparatus capable of transferring and receiving data by email communication and facsimile communication and supervised by a manager ~~comprising the steps of who contacts a service depot when servicing is required, said communications terminal including a processor with stored control programs for performing the steps comprising:~~

registering a manager E-mail address and telephone number of said manager;

registering a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot;

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registering terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus;

registering order details information, specification of a maintenance component, and identification of said service depot;

detecting automatically an event indicating that said maintenance component is defective;

sending a first E-mail communicating a request for said repair service, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, the order details information, specification of the maintenance component, and the identification of the event, to said manager and service depot E-mail addresses, automatically when said event is detected, and said request sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for ordering said repair service and (ii) identifying the registered service depot E-mail address;

determining thereafter that repair of the maintenance component has been completed;[[and]]

sending when it is determined that the repair of the maintenance component has been completed, a second E-mail to the manager E-mail address and service depot E-mail address automatically to report completion of the repair on the communications terminal apparatus;

analyzing a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order;[[and]]

displaying a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, stopping display of the receipt acknowledgement information after transmission of the second email indicating that the repair has been completed, to the manager, and displaying that the maintenance component was repaired; and

communicating with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using the registered facsimile number when said E-mail communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot.

Cancel: Claims 36 and 38-55.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance

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V. The prior art or record fails to teach neither singly nor in combination, the claimed limitations of a maintenance status detector or consumable product status detector system implemented by communications terminal apparatus or image forming apparatus "including a processor with stored control programs for performing the steps comprising: registering a manager E-mail address and telephone number of said manager; registering a service depot E-mail address and telephone number of a service depot; registering terminal identification information of said communications terminal apparatus, wherein said terminal identification information includes at least one of an E-mail address, a serial number, a facsimile number, facsimile TTI information, and a telephone number of said apparatus; registering order details information, specification of a maintenance component, and identification of said service depot; detecting automatically an event indicating that said maintenance component is defective; sending a first E-mail communicating a request for said repair service, including the terminal identification information of the communications terminal apparatus, the order details information, specification of the maintenance component, and the identification of the event, to said manager and service depot E-mail addresses, automatically when said event is detected, and said request sent automatically to said manager (i) including an order form for ordering said repair service and (ii) identifying the registered service depot E-mail address; determining thereafter that repair of the maintenance component has been completed; sending when it is determined that the repair of the maintenance component has been completed, a second E-mail to the manager E-mail address and service depot E-mail address automatically to report completion of the repair on the communications terminal apparatus; analyzing a received email for receipt acknowledgement information indicating acknowledgement of receipt of the order, and response information responding to the order; displaying a text message of the received email corresponding to the receipt acknowledgement information, stopping display of the receipt acknowledgement information after transmission of the second email indicating that the repair has been completed, to the manager, and displaying that the maintenance component was repaired; and communicating with at least one of said manager and service depot through said facsimile communication using the registered facsimile number when said E-mail

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communication is not available to at least one of said manager and said service depot” as stated in independent claims 9, 12, 15, 20, 23, 28, 31 and 35 and described in Applicant’s Specification on pages 8-25.

Specifically, none of the prior art of record teaches an image forming apparatus or communications terminal apparatus registering manager, service depot and terminal identification and contact information for submitting an order including specification of the consumable product/maintenance component and identification of a supplier of the product/component, while communicating using e-mail or facsimile communications to communicate with the manager and service depot/supplier. Applicant’s invention thus allows for the dual communication to the manager and service depot/supplier directly from the device using the registered email addresses of the manager and service depot/supplier or using fax communications when email communication is unavailable. Furthermore, displaying the request for repair and completion of the repair based on receipt acknowledgements communicated to manager and service depot/supplier. These limitations, in conjunction with other limitations in the independent and dependent claims, are not specifically disclosed in the prior art of record.

VI. A review of Claims 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28, 31, 33, 35 and 37 in view of the Examiner’s remarks above, indicates that these claims are allowable over the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by Applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Conclusion

VII. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Kristie Shingles whose telephone number is 571-272-3888. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30-6:00pm.

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If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, William Vaughn can be reached on 571-272-3922. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Kristie Shingles
Examiner
Art Unit 2441

/KDS/

/William C. Vaughn, Jr./

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2444